

to end hunger and poverty

SUSTAINABLE FAMILY FARMING AGRICULTURE IN SOUTH ASIA THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS



ISSUE PAPER
ASK. ANALYZE. ADVOCATE. ACT!



**Asian Farmers' Association
for Sustainable
Rural Development**

**VOLUME 9
NUMBER 1
JANUARY 2019**

South Asia, comprised of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, is home to about 1.8 billion people -- nearly 25% of the world's population.¹ But with an area of 5.2 million square kilometers, or some 1% of the world's area, South Asia is the most densely populated region in the world.² Moreover, despite yielding a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of US\$ 3.3 trillion and Gross National Index (GNI) per capita of US\$1.7 billion in 2017,³ South Asia is the world's hungriest region with a Global Hunger Index score of 30.5.⁴ The region shelters 22% of the world's undernourished. Around 282 million South Asians live below the poverty line, and most of them reside in the rural areas.



In the face of extreme poverty and hunger, and amidst a wide disparity of wealth, the region rightfully pins its hopes on agriculture.

About 57 percent of South Asia is arable or agricultural land. Nearly 60 percent of South Asia's population is engaged in agriculture.

However, the challenges of an increasing population and rising economic growth are straining the agriculture sector as it struggles to meet the

present and future demand for food, to sustain both the people's nutrition and economic development. Aggravating the matter are the region's inefficient use of inputs such as water and fertilizer, and deteriorating natural resources that have led to declining crop yields and waning profitability. Rising food prices, inconsistent domestic and trade policies, and weakened agricultural institutions further intensify this agrarian crisis.⁵

Climate change exacerbates the problem. Much of the agriculture in South Asia is rain fed, so there is a fundamental dependence on rains that come seasonally. The probability of lower crop yields can thus increase with climate change. Much of the agricultural production in the region is undertaken by smallholders, on very small landholdings, by women, with a significant dependence on fisheries for protein in several countries, and dependence on livestock for draft power, manure, milk, and food security. Smallholders are the most vulnerable in the face of climate change, as their ability to bear risk is extremely low.

Women play a significant role in agriculture, including in the production of high-value crops such as vegetables; home garden cultivation; and in the raising of animals. For example, in India, the agriculture sector employs 4/5 of all economically active women in the country and 48% of self-employed farmers are women. In Sri Lanka, 41.5% of women work in agriculture; in Bhutan, the figure is 62%.⁶

A Breakthrough in Partnerships

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is the regional intergovernmental organization of nations in South Asia. At the first SAARC Summit in Dhaka in 1985, the South Asian Heads of State or Government adopted the Charter establishing the SAARC. SAARC Secretariat is based in Kathmandu, Nepal.

SAARC has implemented programs and formulated policies that span issues of agriculture and rural development, economics and trade, social affairs, information, poverty alleviation, energy, transport, science and technology, education, environment, natural disasters, biotechnology, human resource development, tourism, and a host of other concerns in efforts to promote the welfare of the peoples of South Asia, which improve their quality of life, as



well as actions that accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region

At the 18th SAARC Summit in Kathmandu, Nepal last November 25, 2014, the Heads of State or Government of the SAARC decided to increase investment, promote research and development, facilitate technical cooperation and apply innovative, appropriate and reliable technologies in the agriculture sector, including sustainable agriculture, for enhancing productivity to ensure food and nutritional security in the region.

The Leaders reiterated their strong commitment to free South Asia from poverty and directed the Ministerial and Secretary-level mechanisms on poverty alleviation to review the progress and revisit the SAARC Plan of Action and its effective implementation. They also called for a sharing of experiences, expertise and best practices in the agriculture sector.

SAARC established its first regional centre in 1988, now called SAARC Agricultural Centre (SAC). It had a mandate for information management, primarily in the field of agriculture and allied disciplines, including sustainable agriculture. With the passage of time, the Centre faced broader challenges to make regional cooperation more responsive to the needs of the stakeholders and farming communities as South Asia heads for a new order of agricultural transformation. The SAARC Agriculture Centre,

thus has been given an enhanced mandate for agricultural research and development, policy planning, and knowledge management.



Meanwhile, the Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA), an alliance of national farmers' organizations composed of small-scale family farmers, fishers, indigenous peoples, forest users, herders and pastoralists, has worked to achieve a better quality of life for its farming communities.

Founded in 2002 following the sharing of knowledge among farmer communities, AFA promotes secure tenurial rights of small scale family farmers over natural resources, promotes integrated, diversified, organic, climate resilient,

agro ecological practices in farms, fisheries and forests, strengthens family farmers' cooperatives and their enterprises, and empowers women and youth to participate in these ventures.

AFA, in consortium with La Via Campesina, is implementing a capacity building program for farmers organizations in Asia Pacific called Medium Term Cooperation Programme, Phase II (MTCP2), involving 48 national farmers organizations in 4 South Asian countries (Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka). MTCP-2 aims to strengthen capacities of farmers' organizations to be more viable, responsive and accountable to their members.

With their shared goals, AFA, LVC, the MTCP-2 FO partners in South Asia and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) co-organized the "South-South Cooperation Forum in South Asia: Promoting Sustainable Farming Agriculture to Achieve SDG1 and 2", with facilitation from the SAARC Secretariat and SAARC Agriculture Center (SAC). The forum generated case studies and learnings on sustainable agriculture and the role of women FAO and the South Asia-based FOs implementing MTCP2.

This paper highlights the discussion of the good practices by South Asian governments and farmers' organizations on policies and programs related to land, water and forest rights, as well as on sustainable agriculture, and involvement of women and youth in agriculture. Outlined towards the end of the paper are possible ways forward and areas of further collaboration between farmers organizations, governments, SAARC and other stakeholders to achieve sustainable agriculture and sustainable development in the region.

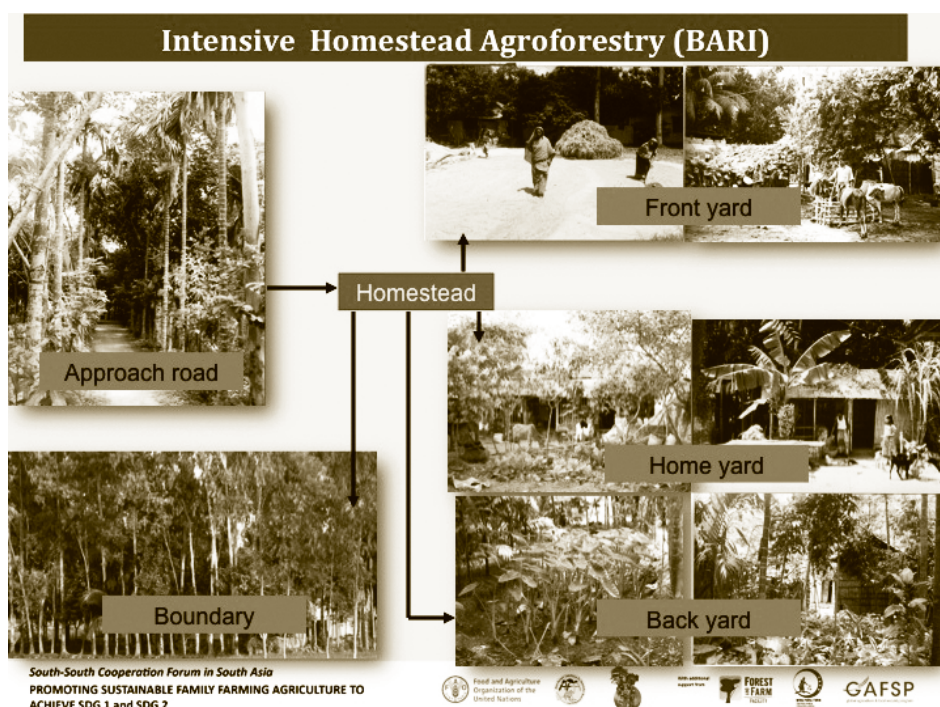
Agro-Forestry and Agriculture in Hills and Mountains

South Asia, along with Southeast Asia, is often described as the cradle of agroforestry due to the long history of a wide array of agricultural systems. The systems that have evolved in the region reflect the accumulated wisdom and adaptation strategies of millions of smallholder farmers to meet their basic needs including food, fuelwood, medicines,

and income, even as decreasing land availability and other factors exert pressure on the farmers. Significant examples of agroforestry in South Asia include multifunctional home-gardens, which promote food security and diversity; fertilizer trees and integrated tree-grass/crop production systems that conserve resources; and tree-dominated habitats, that sustain biodiversity.⁷

While these practices continue to evolve, they are hard-pressed to adapt to the ravages of climate change and natural disasters. Bangladesh, for instance, is constantly left reeling in the wake of disasters brought by environmental degradation. The imminent threat of worsening environmental conditions due to climate change only means the country has to be creative if it is to survive in the years to come. To keep up with its quickly growing population, Bangladesh must accelerate rural growth and agricultural production.

But efforts are constrained by such factors as limited agroforestry management capacity, and limited institutional support structures and services for farmers. In response, the Bangladeshi government has embarked on various agro-forestry



programs since 2016, including:

- (1) Upscaling of multistory agroforestry system for diversified production, high income and ecosystem services
- (2) Scaling-up of farmer-led agroforestry practices for livelihood improvement and resources conservation in the Madhupur Garh area;
- (3) Rice-based agroforestry in Bangladesh:



Status and opportunities for sustainable land use system and combating future climate change challenges; (4) Identification and economic analysis of existing agroforestry practices in the northern region of Bangladesh and development of improved agroforestry practices; (5) Agro-forestry for livelihood development of Jhumia community in Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh; (6) Development of agroforestry model for conversion of rice-cotton-based hill farming system in the Chittagong Hill Tracts; and (7) Simulation of water, nutrient and productivity from existing agroforestry systems in Sylhet region for food security through provisioning the site specific climate-smart farming system

With agroforestry contributing to Bangladesh's desire to alleviate poverty and ensure food and nutritional security, the key to the overall improvement of the farmers' socio-economic status in the country lies in the development and improvement of Bangladesh's agricultural and agroforestry programs.

Meanwhile, in Nepal, the government's Agriculture and Food Security Project, funded by the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP), used an inclusive strategy focusing on women's health to mobilize Dalit households and improve agricultural production in 19 mid hill and mountain districts of mid and far west regions of Nepal. Aiming to improve food security, nutrition and incomes of farmers, there is already testimonial evidence that child mortality has dropped to zero, families have been able to eat three meals a day, and farmers' incomes have improved with the cultivation of livestock. Men in the family have learned to prepare nutritious meals while

the women perform equally important tasks like collecting fuel wood and attending trainings. Main programs in this project included farmers' field schools in crop production, livestock development (goat and poultry), food and nutrition status enhancement.

Fisheries

South Asia's fisheries sector is an engine for economic growth as it generates US\$6.5 billion annually for the region. The sector provides livelihood for about 56.6 million South Asians. But the sector is hampered by habitat degradation, resource depletion, loss of biodiversity, lack of infrastructure for deep-sea fishing and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, among other challenges.⁸

In the face of these constraints, Sri Lanka developed two successful initiatives. The Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resource Development, partnering with the National Aquaculture Development Authority of Sri Lanka, and Management of States, developed a pilot project under Divi Nenguma which seeks to stabilize fish supply and market prices. The program aimed to raise awareness on issues among officials and state management, and to provide infrastructures like estate tanks, reservoirs, ponds, and pond clusters, among other interventions.

Another project is the Sustainable Fisheries Community Based Resource Management launched in the Kattu Del Fishery (KDF) at the Negombo Lagoon by the World Forum of Fishers Peoples (WFFP). Since resources are limited in Negombo, its residents endeavor to equitably share



their produce. Kattu Del is a traditional means of fishing using a stake-net to catch shrimp. It is used in channels about 3.5 meters deep which connect the Negombo Lagoon to the sea. Larger nets are tied across the channels at particular locations.

KDF shares the limited shrimp, crab and lobster catch equitably among the fisher communities operating in the lagoon. The communities decide who will fish in certain locations. These assignments are rotated to allocate resources among 300 participating farmers. Through this program, the community has gained insight on resources management and equitable sharing of resources and gains.

Seeds

The clear and present threat to farmers is its compromised seed sovereignty. At present, big biotech companies control the seed sector. Indian environmental activist Dr. Vandana Shiva remarked that “control over seed is the first link in the food chain because seed is the source of life. When a corporation controls seed, it controls life, especially the life of farmers.” The control is not just physical but also intellectual. The challenge has become so daunting that it now needs a regional response.

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) seed bank (SSB) was thus conceptualized in 2008. The seed bank was ratified by SAARC member states in 2016 at the 18th SAARC Summit with the directive to convene the SSB governing body.

The SSB aims to:

1. provide regional support to national seed security efforts; address regional seed shortages through collective actions and foster inter-country partnerships;
2. promote increase of Seed Replacement Rate (SRR) with appropriate varieties at a faster rate as far as possible so that the use of quality seed for crop production can be ensured; and
3. act as a regional seed security reserve for the Member States.

SAARC Seed Forum was eventually established on 25 February 2010.

The Forum's mandate is to promote sustainable and coherent development

of Seed System so that the farmers of a country from the region can reap the benefit from the innovation of the other countries. The SAARC Seed Forum aims to:

1. advocate and support development of harmonized and suitable policies and strategies and regulatory frameworks for development of seed sector;



2. help plan and implement sustainable seed systems in SAARC countries;
3. act as a common platform to promote business in the region; and
4. take up any other activities as may be necessary to fulfil its mandate.

Farmers play an important role in seed banking. The seed bank was established based on the experience of the farmers. Seed is a public property so it must be allowed to be traded within the country and across the region. Seed sovereignty includes the right to access, save, breed, and exchange seeds. Thus, seed sovereignty is the foundation of food sovereignty.

FOs in Bangladesh, with the support of MTCP2, have established 14 community seed banks in eight coastal communities in Bangladesh where only local varieties are produced and preserved. Any farmer, member or non member of the farmers group, can get seeds free of charge. S/he however, is expected to return the same amount of seeds that was given to her/him. As a case in point, the organization Kendrio Krishok Moitree has produced 12 tons of rice seeds which were then distributed to its members. As a result of these seed banks, local and good varieties of seeds are being preserved, seed producing farmers have a secure selling point, and farmers' seed supply has been secured.



Women

Women in the region have less access to productive resources, basic services, technologies, infrastructure, and off-farm employment.

In South Asia, because sons are preferred over daughters, a girl child must struggle twice as hard to survive and fulfill her potential. If the girl child overcomes health issues and gets a basic education, it is unlikely she will escape child marriage (one in two girls are married before the age of 18). Disparities by region, class, caste, and income affect the dispensation of maternal and child health services. The young age at which many girls first become pregnant, combined with their poor education, inadequate decision-making power and poor control over resources, means that many enter pregnancy ill-prepared to support the health of their unborn child and then to raise a healthy child. Across the region, structural inequalities and the low status of women result in gross disadvantage for them.⁹

Despite their contributions to rural development, rural women's and girls' rights and priorities are hardly realized in the implementation of legal frameworks, development policies, and investment strategies. They are under-represented in local and national institutions and governance mechanisms and they tend to have less decision-making power in the household and society. Rural women and girls continue to face serious challenges in carrying out their multiple productive and reproductive roles in their families and communities. Much of their work is unpaid and unrecognized, including their domestic work, on which their households and local economies depend. Rural and urban migration has affected agriculture and the burden is greater on women who are left behind to tend to the farms, the children, and the household.

In the midst of these challenges, new opportunities have emerged for rural women's economic empowerment, including through agri-food value chains, and political empowerment through collective action and social movements. Women empowerment remains the single most effective way to achieve sustainable development, more so in the agriculture sector.

In Bhutan, of the 58 percent of the population involved in agriculture, the greater 30.5 percent are women and 39 percent of Bhutan's households is headed by women. Because of the matrilineal inheritance practice in Bhutan, around 60 percent

SELF EMPLOYED WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION (SEWA)

The Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA), established in 1972, is the single largest union of self-employed women in the informal sector in India. It is an organization of poor, self-employed women workers. They do not earn regular salaries with welfare benefits like workers in the organized sector, and so they make up the unprotected labor force of India. Established to ensure self-reliance and full employment of women farmers, the organization now has 2 million women members in 14 states.

In total, there are 8,37,941 SEWA members from the rural sector; 7,75,050 of this number is engaged in the agriculture sector. This number includes small and marginal farmers, landless agricultural sharecroppers, casual laborers, and salt farmers. Despite women's contribution to agriculture, they still do not get the recognition they rightly deserve. The agriculture sector faces various problems and women are the worst affected by them. The challenges faced by women include environmental and economic issues.

SEWA mitigates the impact of these challenges primarily by organizing women. In 1995 SEWA initiated an agriculture campaign based on the experience of small and marginal farmers. The campaign emphasized developing farms as an enterprise using an integrated approach of organizing and getting access to technical trainings, inputs, tools and equipment, finance and credit, and market support.

SEWA continues to develop supportive services for its members, and several cooperatives have been organized to provide savings and credit, health care, child care, insurance, legal aid, capacity building and communication services. Its services to members include training on soil testing and organic agriculture as well as on setting up of seed banks, plant clinics, rainfall insurance, solar pumps for irrigation, mobile -based rural advisory service, tool and equipment libraries and a processing and marketing facility called Rural Distribution Network (RUDI).



of rural women own land. Women are engaged in production and marketing, weeding crops and transplanting paddy seedlings, processing home-made products, collecting drinking water, food preparation, family health care, child care, house cleaning and hygiene maintenance, and weaving handicrafts.

Cognizant of their key role, the government of Bhutan has been forming farmers' groups and

cooperatives and improving agricultural infrastructure and gender-friendly mechanization.

In Sri Lanka, the Lankan Farmers' Forum (LFF) established the Kandyan Home Gardens (KHG), a women-led enterprise. LFF realized that Lankan farmers cannot depend on a single product to support their livelihood. Sri Lankan pepper, for example, used to bring in Rs 1,200 per kilogram, but has now dropped to Rs 600 per kilogram. Thus, LFF promoted the cultivation of other plants and taught members to produce eco-friendly products like bags.

Youth

As South Asia stands on the cusp of the Asian Century, its youth are at a crossroads. In 2010, the 15-24 age group comprised at least a third of the working population in each South Asian country, stressing the youth's impact on the economy in the region. In less than a decade, the population of South Asia has become much younger, with its



population under age 25 reaching 370 million in 2015,¹⁰ nearly half of the global youth population at the time.

A youthful population tends to reap benefits for its country, as the youth are seen to drive savings and investments, as well as comprise a high-consuming market and an energetic workforce. This growth potential is illustrated in the contrasting populations of China and India. China's labor force of 787 million as of 2017,¹¹ the biggest in the world, may soon be eclipsed by India as the latter's young population joins the workforce while China's working-age population shrinks.¹²

With an increasingly youthful population, there is an unprecedented opportunity for young people to take an active role in shaping the region's future. The youth dominate the working age group in the region, but at the same time, they also comprise half of the region's unemployed.¹³

But South Asia's youth would rather not go into agriculture. The challenges that the youth face in the agricultural sector are daunting. Access to resources, including lands and loans, is limited, as the youth are discriminated against.

To harness the promise of youth, the Sri Lankan government initiated programs to ensure that they contribute to national agricultural development while improving the economic, social, and nutritional status of their families. One such initiative is Hela Bojun (Young Women Entrepreneurship Development Program), which sells native Sri Lankan food at subsidized prices. Conceptualized by Dr. Rohan Wijekoon, Director General of the Agriculture Department in Peradeniya, Hela Bojun started with one outlet in 2006 and has since grown to 15 outlets by 2015. The project promotes food

and entrepreneurship among young Sri Lankan women.

Bhutan youth, meanwhile, conceived the Haa Valley Cooperative, which opens up dairy products markets for farmers, encourages farmers to adopt better livestock production practices, encourages organic product development, and produces hygienic products. Formed by 15 young men and women, the cooperative has been joined by more than 200 farmers and is now operating a milk processing center, in Tshelungkha village, Eusu Gewog, Haa Dzongkhag. Through the collection of fresh milk from farmers which is then used to produce various dairy products, the cooperative has helped increase the household income of its members as well as that of its community. The cooperative also provided a better market of dairy products, created livelihood for the youth, and increased the number of farmers rearing improved cow breeds.



Lowlands

Lowlands have crop growth that are dependent on rainfall and standing water. Rice is the dominant crop, but pulses and oil seeds are also grown. Buffalo populations in these areas are lower than in irrigated lands, while the reverse trend applies in the case of cattle. Pigs, poultry and ducks are also usually raised. The lowlands of South Asia are semi-arid or arid. They generally have larger areas of arable and permanent cropland, which account for greater crop production. Thus, lowland areas have a high potential for agricultural productivity.¹⁴

With its productivity being dependent on the availability of natural waters, lowlands are

sensitive to climate change. Additionally, the agricultural productivity of lowlands is impaired by government policies such as those that favor corporate farms like palm oil plantations. Moreover, while government support for agriculture has been shrinking, smallholder farmers' dependence on seeds, fertilizers and pesticides supplied by corporations has been swelling.

Recognizing these factors, Action Aid Bangladesh has been pushing sustainable agriculture practices in the countries where it works. In Bangladesh especially, it has focused on seven pillars: gender equity and women's rights, soil conservation, sustainable water management, agro-biodiversity preservation, livelihood diversification, processing and market access, and support for farmers' organizations. In the course of implementing projects around these pillars, Action Aid has recognized the importance of nurturing cooperation among agricultural research institutes, academic institutions and public extension services. It also recommends involving farmers in policy development, ensuring farmers' access and control over seeds, and developing women as entrepreneurs.

In Nepal, the Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development (LIBIRD), through its many interventions with farmers, evolved a number of good practices including participatory crop breeding, mainstreaming of home gardens, promotion of local crops using indigenous seeds, and non-conventional financing. These practices promise to make communities resilient against climate change while attaining food security and maintaining the farmers' dignity.



Synthesis and ways forward

Agriculture should be the key to South Asia's development, with the region's vast arable lands. Yet, its farmers are poor and hungry due in part to the following factors:

- Climate change aggravated by natural hazards and threats is distressing the agricultural sector.
- Social systems inimical to women and youth involvement in agriculture have limited their ability to contribute to the sector.
- The increasing wage gap puts natural resources (especially lands, waters and forests) and wealth in the hands of the powerful few who are able to dictate liberal economic policies to the detriment of the agricultural sector, disrupting the lives of the rural people.
- Large biotech companies are able to control the supply of seeds, dictating food production, and controlling the supply and marketing chain.

But not everything is bleak. Governments and their citizens, through their Family Farmers' Organizations (FOs) alike have developed initiatives on sustainable agriculture, fishery and forestry, climate resilient agriculture, inclusion of women and youth in agriculture

and seed sovereignty. These initiatives have improved the lives of farmers. These initiatives can be upscaled with the support of various government and inter-government development agencies, and farmers organizations.

Ways forward to further promote sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry in South Asia include pursuing development in a more integrated approach; facilitating women farmer's rights to land and access to opportunities; building and strengthening cooperatives using a value chain approach; providing spaces for involvement of farmers through their organizations in decision-making processes; using information and communication technology for awareness raising, increasing production and linking farmers to markets, inclusion of agriculture in the curriculum of schools and further cooperation and partnerships among development agencies and stakeholders in agriculture. Moreover, it has been demonstrated that an effective way to reduce poverty and ensure food security is to mobilize, engage, and empower women in the agriculture sector.

Community-driven innovations like SEWA and KHG can provide blueprints for family farming and other sustainable agricultural practices that in turn would help achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals 1 (end poverty in all its forms everywhere) and 2 (end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture). Regional level initiatives like the SAARC Seed Bank show that farmer fellowships, partnerships, cooperation, and collaboration know no boundaries. Regional and international networks and organizations like SAARC, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development should and would continue to provide the venue for knowledge sharing and technical, financial, and technological assistance.

Collaboration of AFA, its members and partner FOs in MTCP2 project, with SAARC and its regional center, SAARC Agricultural Center, and with intergovernmental organizations such as Food and Agriculture Organization and International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) should be pursued at local and global levels. A major concern at the local level are the negative impacts of commercialization and neo-liberal capitalism to local farmers. Farmers are interested to know more about how to maximize country-level efforts to improve the agriculture sector, particularly for family farming. At the regional and global levels, collaboration could be done through knowledge-sharing and jointly advocating for policies that would promote good agricultural practices, technologies, systems and governance.

Endnotes

- 1 "Southern Asia Population," Population. Worldometers. 20 January 2019 <<http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/southern-asia-population/>>.
- 2 "The Five Regions of Asia – Asia Countries and Regions," Politics. worldatlas.com. 20 January 2019 <<https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/the-four-regions-of-asia.html>>.
- 3 "Data," South Asia. 2018. World Bank Group. 20 January 2019 <<https://data.worldbank.org/region/south-asia>>.
- 4 "The Regions," 2018 Global Hunger Index: Global, Regional, and National Trends. 2019. Global Hunger Index. 20 January 2019 <<https://www.globalhungerindex.org/results/>>.
- 5 Pramod Joshi, "Greening Agriculture in South Asia," International Food Policy Research Institute 9 May 2012, 20 January 2019 <<http://www.ifpri.org/blog/greening-agriculture-south-asia>>.
- 6 *ibid*
- 7 B. Mohan Kumar, Ani Kumar Singh and S.K. Dhyani, "South Asian Agroforestry: Traditions, Transformations and Prospects," *Agroforestry: The Future of Global Land Use*, pp. 359-389 (2012, Springer).
- 8 S.S. Giri (2017, February) Fisheries and Aquaculture in South Asia: Challenges, priorities and way forward. Presentation made on 8 February 2017 at NASC, New Delhi.
- 9 "Gender and Equality," South Asia. UNICEF. 20 January 2019 <<https://www.unicef.org/rosa/what-we-do/gender-equality>>.
- 10 World Bank, Atlas of Sustainable Development Goals 2017 (Washington, DC: World Bank Publications, 2017) 44.
- 11 "Labor force, total," Data. 2018. World Bank Group. 20 January 2019 <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.TOTL.IN?year_high_desc=true>.
- 12 Elias Glen and Stella Qiu, "China working-age population shrinks, presenting pitfall for pension plans," Reuters 28 February 2018, 20 January 2019 <<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-economy-population/china-working-age-population-shrinks-presenting-pitfall-for-pension-plans-idUSKCN1GC18C>>.
- 13 World Bank (2006, January) Partnering with Youth in South Asia. Presentation made at The World Bank South Asia Region.
- 14 Devendra, C. (2012). Rainfed Areas and Animal Agriculture in Asia: The Wanting Agenda for Transforming Productivity Growth and Rural Poverty. *Asian-Australasian Journal of Animal Sciences*, 25 (1): 122-142.





CREDITS:

This issue paper is based on the proceedings of the workshop entitled: “South South Cooperation Forum in South Asia : Promoting Sustainable Family Farming Agriculture To Achieve SDG1 and 2”, held last December 14-16, 2017 in Kathmandu Nepal, and participated by 70 representatives of government agencies, non-government organizations, farmers’ and fishers’ organizations, and scholars from six South Asian countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka) as well as from international development partners (FAO), and regional organizations SAARC Secretariat and SAARC Agriculture Center. The forum was primarily supported by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, with small complementary funding from Global Agriculture Food Security Program (GAFSP), FAO-Forest and Farm Facility (FFF) and World Rural Forum.

WRITERS: Maricel Almojuela Tolentino, Conrad Tolentino

CONTRIBUTORS: Bernice Maripaz Galang, Xerxes Z. Arcenal

EDITOR: Ma. Estrella Penunia

LAY-OUT AND PRINTING: Bebs Pavia, Art Angel Printshop

PHOTOS: AFA Photobank, Forum presentations

Published by AFA

from the grant support of
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations



Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA)

Rm 206, Partnership Center, 59 C. Salvador St., Loyola Heights, Quezon City, Philippines

Telephone: 632 425 0176

E-mail: afa@asianfarmers.org

Website: www.asianfarmers.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/AsianFarmersAssociation

Twitter: www.twitter.com/AsianFarmers